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PLAIN NARRATIVE

OF

FACTS,

OR,

The AUTHOR'S CASE fairly and
candidly stated,

By Way of APPEAL to the PUBLICK.

By W. WEBSTER, D.D.



LONDON:

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College Park, Maryland

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
The LORD-MAYOR,
The ALDERMEN,
AND
COMMON COUNCIL of the City of
LONDON,

WHO have always been eminent for their Generosity and Charity; for their Encouragement of Trade and Commerce, and all the liberal Arts; for giving Premiums, and bestowing Marks of Honour, upon such as have distinguish'd themselves by their Councils, or by their Arms, in the Service of their *King* and *Country*; by their constant Attachment to the Constitution in *Church* and *State*;

The Author of the following *Narrative* Inscribes it with great *Respect*, in some Hopes of being rewarded, at least of their Compassion, for the Pains he has taken, and the Money that he has spent, in the Service of *Religion*, their *King*, and their *Country*, by their most humble Servant,

W. WEBSTER

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE I begin my *Narrative* of Complaints, it is fit that I should first discharge a Debt of Gratitude, which I always pay with the highest Pleasure. I have received many Testimonies of Respect, and Civilities, from the Principal of the *Bishops*, and other *Gentlemen*; some of them perfect Strangers to every Thing relating to me, but my *Character*, and *Circumstances*: In particular, I desire the *Earl of Hardwick* to accept of my thankful Acknowledgements, for an handsome Present, made me in a very genteel Manner: I mean not to lessen my Obligations to any of the *Bishops*, or others; but, then, I hope none of them can blame me for doing Justice to his Lordship's Benevolence, where there could be no other Motive.

Amongst my *Friends* and *Acquaintance*, Mr. *Plummer*, *Knight of the Shire*, and my *Parishioner*, has, and ought to have, a very large Share of my Esteem, and Affection, for £50 given me at a Time when I must have gone to *Prison*; and in a manner that very much heightened the Obligation, because he took Pains to make it seem less. I have other Acts of *Generosity*, and *Piety*, to acknowledge, which derive more Honour to his Character, and a greater Blessing to his Family, than the most immense Estate hoarded up, or spent in Shew, or lavish'd in Prodigality, can bestow; but, I hope, this Gentleman, great and good as he is, will excuse me, if

I distinguish another Person, not the less honourable for not being a *Gentleman*, who is absolutely the greatest Genius, the best, and the most amiable Man, that I know in the World; I mean, Mr. *Richardson*, the Printer. When I came to *Ware*, I was £90 in his Debt, tho' I had clear'd off regularly, by quarterly Payments, £50, and never could save any Thing out of my Income ever since the Change of my Livings, towards getting out of Debt. As soon as I was possess'd of *Ware*, or, rather, as soon as *Ware* was possess'd of *me*, he sent me a kind Letter, told me, that any Sum of Money that I wanted was at my Service; and when he saw that I liv'd as *frugally* as possible, he forgave me the whole Debt. I forbear to enlarge upon his Character, because I know not how to do it Justice.

I am obliged to conceal another Person, to whom I owe many and great, tho' not equal, Obligations, and which I have received at different Times, and all of them with Circumstances of great *Respect* and *Kindness*. It is an Act of *Self-Denial*, that I am forced to stop the strong Current of my *Gratitude*, by not making my Acknowledgments as *publick*, as his *Charity* was seasonable. I am afraid of being more particular, for fear of giving Offence.

Having made my grateful Acknowledgments to my *Friends*, I would willingly prevent the Resentments of such as may be disposed to be angry. I mean to *affront* no Man, but to be *respectful* to all my betters, especially the *Bishops*. Several of them have acknowledged to me that they are persuaded of my most affectionable Esteem for the *whole Order*. My Grandfather, Dr. *Sparrow*, was a Bishop of great Learning, and Piety, whose Family were *Gentlemen*, Generations before he was

a Lord. I hope I shall have the Benefit of his Character. Some of the Facts may possibly give Offence; but, they are related in a plain Manner, without any Reflections, and without any inward Resentment. If I can save myself from *Ruin*, and do Justice, 'tis all that I aim. All my Views are fixt, my Hopes are full of another World, I am a Candidate for *Eternity*; and what should make an *immortal* Being very anxious, or much delighted, but the Thoughts of *Immortality*! I am travelling to a Country from whence I shall never return, and am almost at my Journey's End; and I see many of my fellow Travellers as intent upon their Accommodations on the Road, as if they were at *Home*, and scrambling for what they are going to leave behind them; I see them with some Amazement, with more Concern; but with as little Envy, as I see a Party of *Children*, highly pleas'd with their childish Diversions, or squabbling about their Marbles.

A

Plain NARRATIVE of FACTS.

I WAS fifteen Years *Curate* of *St. Dunstan's in the West*, by *Temple-Bar*; which was so slavish a Curacy, that had I been there, half fifteen more, I should not have had a Tooth left in my Head. However, I behav'd myself in such a Manner, that the Parish (the Dissenters not excepted) were very kind to me, and subscribed 25 Guineas a Year towards the *Daily Prayers*. My Behaviour recommended me to the Favour of Judge *Price*, and Lord *Palmerston*, who, without knowing any Thing of each other's Intention, and as much without my Knowledge, recommended me, in the strongest Manner, to the *Bishop* of *London*; who, as they both assured me, was pleased to give me the best of Characters. But, Mr. *Jenks*, the Gentleman who rented the Living of Dr. *Grant*, dying, I was apprehensive that I should be discharged, unless I would consent to read the *early Prayers*, and do the laborious Part of the Duty, for £20 a Year. Upon this, I waited upon the *Bishop*, laid my Case before him, told him how cruel a Thing it would be, after having been the sole Incumbent for several Years, I should be degraded in so ignominious a manner. His Lordship was pleased to answer, that he would represent my Case in the strongest Manner to Dr. *Grant*. But, instead of representing to him, with how much Reputation to myself, and how much to the Satisfaction of the People, I had behaved myself,

myself, during the fifteen Years I had serv'd the Cure, his Lordship was only pleas'd to say (I had it from Dr. *Grant* himself) he had promis'd to mention it to him, and so he had, but told him, he might do as he would: Some Time afterwards I waited on the Bishop for a Turn at St. *Paul's*, telling his Lordship, that he had often done me that Favour, but now I came to ask it as Bread; but, tho' he had never before refus'd me, now he thought fit to give me a flat Denial. Tho' I have been represented as an hot Man, for having so warm a Zeal for *Religion*, the Bishop never knew that *Grant* had betrayed him; for I always behaved, with the utmost Respect to his Lordship, and never omitted an Opportunity of defending his Writings in publick, and his Character in private.

Being so long out of Preferment, and living all the while upon Credit (or I must have died in Obscurity like a poisoned Rat in a Hole) my eldest Brother, at my Request, made me a Present of my Dr's. Degrees. This occasioned great Speculations, concerning the *Reason* of such a surprising Event; but, tho' all were at a Loss for the true Motive, yet all agreed to shew me great Respect. A little before, my Acquaintance shunn'd me, and seem'd to be afraid of me, as the *Vermin* scamper away from a tumbling House; but, now every Body that I met, smiling upon me with Pleasure, and Amazement, wish'd me Joy; and a Relation at the Recommendation of his Sister (who, in the Time of my Adversity, would not speak to me) gave me my Living in *Suffolk*.

About this Time there was a Scheme form'd, by several eminent Divines, for a *weekly* Paper, in Support of *Religion* and *Virtue*, the *Bishops* and *Clergy*,

Clergy, and all useful Literature, and I was thought a proper Person to be put at the Head of it, though, a Design which required greater Abilities, and more Knowledge than I was Master of, made me the most improper Person. However, I consulted my, then, very good Friend, the Bishop of *London* that now is; his Answer was, a most excellent Design, *This is the Thing that we have wanted these fifty Years.* Upon this Encouragement, I undertook it; but being more approved of, than supported, it procured me nothing but great Trouble, much ill Will, and Abuses of all Sorts; great Expence, and fresh Difficulties.

Before it was set up quite a Year, my kind Friend, the late Lord *Palmerston*, offer'd me £300 a Year, besides Preferment, if I would turn it into a *ministerial Paper*; but I was so *hot*, that my intemperate Zeal for the Interest of *Religion* and *Virtue*, &c. induced me to refuse the greatest *political Advantages*.

Much about the same Time (for it was a little sooner) another remarkable Accident happened, which shewed what a *violent hot Man* I was, and what imprudent Things Zeal without Judgment will produce. *Gordon*, the Translator of *Tacitus*, a much *better Man*, tho' a profest Infidel, wrote the most scandalously abusive Remarks upon an excellent Sermon of Bishop *Hare's*, upon the 30th of *January*; how it happened, I know not, but none of the *Clergy*, tho' *They*, as well as the *Bishop*, were so scurrilously treated, appear'd in their Defence; but after he and the Party had triumphed a considerable Time, a particular Friend of the *Bishop's* desired me to answer him. I waited on his Lordship at *Barn Elms*, had his Consent, undertook the Cause, and after exchanging

two Shilling Pamphlets, and a Letter in one of the News Papers, I silenced the Remarker, to his great Mortification, and the Satisfaction of his Lordship, who wrote me a very complaisant Letter, assuring me, that if he had been Bishop of *London*, he would have provided for me; but never gave me any Preferment, nor one Farthing to reward me for the Pains I had taken, and the Service I had done him. I mentioned to Archbp. *Herring* this, with some other Instances of the unkind Treatment I had met with, when his Grace, with the utmost Amazement, lifted up both his Hands, saying, *I have no Notion how Men can possibly act so.*

I shall now give some Account of the unkind Behaviour of my *present* Diocesan to me. When I came first to *St. Dunstan's*, I had the Honour of as great an Intimacy with his Lordship, as could subsist between a Person of his Character and Station, and one in my low Situation; insomuch, that he has sent to me, on a *Sunday* before I was stirring, to preach for him at the *Temple*, which I never refused to do, if I could get any Supply for my own Church. This kind Intercourse, and the most friendly Correspondence, continued uninterrupted, till the *Dean of Chichester* was made *Bishop of Bangor*. His Lordship, then, of his own Accord, was pleased to make large Professions of Friendship, and a kind Apology, for not having it in his Power to promote me to any Thing in that Diocese, for that he thought himself obliged to give, what small Things he had in his Gift, to the Natives of the Country. I was pleased with his good Intention, and satisfied with his Answer. But, as soon as his Lordship was translated to *Salisbury*, one of the *Canons* of that Church gave me Notice of a vacant *Prebend*, before the
Bishop

Bishop could have any Intelligence of the Vacancy, and insisted upon my asking it, for that there was a Design of bringing me in *Canon*. Accordingly I wrote a very respectful Letter to the Bishop; taking the Liberty to introduce my *Petition*, with reminding him of his kind Apology for not preferring me when he was Bishop of *Bangor*. His Lordship never answered my Letter, because, as he told a Friend of mine, he was determin'd not to give me the *Prebend*, and did not care to give me a flat Denial. A little before I had my *Palsy*, I waited on his Lordship, at *Fulham*, in hopes of receiving a *Present*, for a Book which I had sent him; but, tho' his Lordship knew that I publish'd it to raise a Contribution for the Payment of Debts, contracted, not through any Extravagance, but in the Service of the *Publick*: He was pleased to reprimand me for going about the Country in that Manner, and never ask'd me to drink, tho' I walked all the Way from *London*. I treated him with all imaginable Respect, express'd the utmost Concern, lest I should have done something to disoblige him; to which his Lordship replied, *no, you never did any thing to disoblige me, neither.*

While I was unprovided for, Bishop *Gooch's* Curacy at *St. Clement's East-Cheap* became vacant, and his Lordship, knowing my distressful Situation, made me his Curate in Opposition to the united Petition of the Parishioners, in favour of another Person who had officiated there for some Time. Half a Year afterwards there was a *Parish Meeting*, and I had the Pleasure to be present when his Lordship received their publick Thanks for bringing me amongst them; and when I left the Parish they gave me a parting Testimony of their good Opinion of my Conduct, by making me

me a *Present*: So that it is difficult to say which behaved with the most Kindness to me, the *Bishop*, or his *Parishioners*. Hence arises a natural Objection against me. It may seem strange that, as I had been many Years Curate to his Lordship, had behaved with so much Credit to myself, and so much to his Lordship's Satisfaction, both in the Capacity of a *Parish-Priest* and a *Publick Writer*, he should never think me worthy of something better than a *private Curacy*. It may very well seem strange to the World, because it is so uncommon a Thing, but I can account for it very naturally. His Lordship was one of the most generous and friendly Gentlemen that ever I knew, and shew'd that he had a good Degree of Kindness for me; but I had very ill Offices done me. Some of his Acquaintance would have persuaded him to discard me totally, as a Person unworthy of the Honour of his Friendship. My Crime was this. I had publish'd a Pamphlet, intitled, *The Consequences of Trade, and of the Woollen Trade in particular*; and spent a great deal of Money in the Pursuit of a Scheme to prevent the Exportation of *unmanufactured Wool*. This Pamphlet was in such great Reputation all over the Kingdom, that, without knowing who was the Author of it, it was said that he deserv'd to have his *Statue* set up in every Trading Town in *England*. Strange indeed! that for the same Thing I should forfeit the Friendship of the Bishop, and deserve such a publick Mark of Honour from the Nation.

When I had carried on the *Miscellany* eight Years, it recommended me so strongly to the late *Archbishop Potter*, that he was determin'd to take Care of me; and, as an Earnest of his future Favours, he offered me these Livings. This brought me into a great Difficulty. I had, then, a Living

in the Country worth £102 a Year, which was given me by a Relation, while I was Curate to Bishop *Gooch*. My Curacy was worth £70 per Ann. So that according to the best Estimate that I could make of the probable Income of these Vicarages, *Curate*, *Tiths*, *Taxes*, and *Repairs*, deducted, my Income, upon the whole, would be not quite £100 a Year; considerably less than it was, then. This was a very discouraging Circumstance, but I had strong *prudential* Reasons for being desirous to secure the *Patronage* of a Person, who, I was sure would have it in his Power to make me ample Amends for any Loss that I might sustain by the Acceptance of so great an Honour. However, as it was a Matter of such Consequence to the Happiness of my Life, I consulted one of the wisest Men I ever knew, I mean, the late Bishop of London, who readily answered; "*You must accept of the Livings, or his Grace will think, you have no Confidence in his Honour; and the rest of the World will blame you.*" Upon this I very cheerfully accepted them, and was forced, in a little Time, to lay out £70 upon two old Houses, and had no more than £20 allowed me for *Dilapidations*. The House at *Ware* is very large, six Rooms on a Floor, two Coach-houses and a Stable that I can make little Use of; about three hundred Feet of *Paling*, between five and six thousand Feet of *Tiling*, and a large expensive Garden, to be kept in constant Repair, not an Acre of *Glebe Land*, and I, myself, in a more expensive Situation than when I was a *Curate* at London. Not chusing to trust to the Fidelity of any *Favourite*, in a reasonable Time I took a proper Opportunity of laying the disagreeable State of my Affairs before his Grace. As I expected (for his Grace was a very honest Man) he absolutely promised

mis'd to make me easy, but, it pleas'd God to take him away before he perform'd his Promise. I was lately in some Hopes from the high Opinion, and the great Regard that Mr. *Potter*, at that Time, express'd for me, that, as his *Grace* had left him an ample Fortune, he would have made me some Satisfaction for the Loss I had sustain'd by his *Grace's* Promotion; but I wrote two very respectful Letters to him to that Purpose, and never could have the Favour of an Answer, nor the Opportunity of seeing him. After some Time, by the Interest of the present worthy *Master* (to whom I take this publick Opportunity of returning my Thanks) I recover'd the Arrears of an Augmentation, payable to the small Living of *Thundridge*; but, then, my former Living being a *Rector*y, and I quitting it just before *Harvest*, the Loss of all the Corn, and the Dilapidations which I paid my Successor, balanced that Account.

My next *voluntary Patron* was the late Lord *Gower*. In the Year 23 I dedicated the Life of *General Monk* to him, and afterwards inscribed to him my Book on *Tithe*, which pleas'd him so well that he sent his Steward, Mr. *Barber*, Member of Parliament for *Stamford*, with a kind Offer of his Patronage. It was a little before the Earl of *Chesterfield* was call'd home from *Ireland*, to be appointed one of the *Secretaries of State*. And there was so great an Intimacy between the two Earls, that Lord *Gower* order'd Mr. *Barber* to ask me whether I would go to *Ireland*, for, that he was sure of being able to provide for me that Way. I accepted the Offer very chearfully. But Lord *Chesterfield's* Return home put an End to that Scheme, but not to my Expectations. It happen'd that his Lordship wanted my Defence of him against the *Jacobites* at the Time of the *Re-*
bellion,

belljon, and I was importuned, by Mr. *Barber*, to undertake it. Mr. *Barber*, with what View, whether to strengthen my Interest in his Lordship, or the better to secure my Assistance, I can't tell, but I was at the Expence of a Journey into *Staffordshire*, and of providing an Assistant to do my own Duty. While I was at *Trentbam*, Mr. *Levison Gower*, a Gentleman of great Honour, ask'd me why I did not draw up the *Vindication*. I then took Occasion to talk with his Lordship upon the Subject, and took some Pains to inform myself of some Particulars, and, when I went home, put the Design in Execution, with all the Accuracy that I was Master of, and was at a considerable Expence for an *Amanuensis* to transcribe it. The fair Copy was sent to *Trentbam*, but his Lordship alter'd his Mind, and would not publish it; so that, besides the Trouble of writing it, the Expence of my *Amanuensis*, the Expence of my Journey, the Expence of several Books which his Lordship had of me, to the Value of about three Guineas, I lost the Opportunity of letting the World know what I had to say, in his Lordship's *Vindication* (I venture to affirm, that nobody but a *profess'd Jacobite* could object against it) and was a Fellow-Sufferer with his Lordship, in my Reputation, without ever receiving one Farthing Reward, for my *Inscription*, or *Defence* of him, or being permitted to see his Lordship. I remonstrated in the most humble and respectful Manner imaginable to his Lordship by *Letter*, but without an Answer. I have since address'd myself in the same Manner to the *present Earl*, but with as little Effect. I then applied myself to Mr. *Barber*, by the Advice of that worthy Gentleman, Mr. *Levison Gower*, as the fittest Advocate for me, he having been the Person employed to bring

bring me the Offer of his Lordship's Friendship; and the chief Instrument in procuring, thro' his Importunity, my *Vindication*; but, though he had been, before, punctual in his Answers, and was always my most affectionate, and my most obliged humble Servant, I never could get any Answer from him.

Having hitherto been unsuccessful in my Application, I was resolved to try another Expedient. I had a great Opinion of the Character of the Duke of Bedford, and conceived some Hopes of procuring his powerful Intercession with his Relation. Accordingly, I applied myself, to his chief Domestick, Mr. Butcher, laid my Case before him, and left a Book, which he promised to deliver, together with a Letter from me. Mr. Butcher's Answer was to this Effect; *I dare answer for the Duke's Generosity; you may depend upon an handsome Present, and that his Grace will not keep you long in suspense; but, whether he will think it proper to intermeddle in the Affair of Lord Gower, his Grace is the best Judge of such delicate Affairs; but you certainly have a Demand upon the Estate of the late Earl, and Mr. Barber, is obliged in honour to concern himself.* I went several Times to Bedford-House, but I always receiv'd for answer, that the Book and Letter were laid upon his Grace's Table, but that he never had said any thing to him about it. This I am sure of; that his Grace never saw my Letter, nor the Book neither. How that happen'd I know not, but I know the Consequence, I never could get any Relief. I shall try what this Narrative will do, for I shall trouble his Lordship, Earl Gower, and Mr. Barber, with one of them. I ask for nothing but common Justice, of his Lordship; I ask for nothing, of Mr. Barber, but his Endeavours to procure it me.

About

About this Time I had another Instance of Lord Gower's great Opinion of me, and of my ill Success in all my *publick* Undertakings. The *Rebellion* broke out, and as all that was valuable to a *Protestant*, to an *Englishman*, to a *Christian*, was in Danger, I wrote in Defence of his Majesty against the *Jacobites*. His Lordship corrected every Sheet of my Pamphlet as it came from the Press, which he would hardly have done if he had not highly approved of my Performance. But, it received much greater Honour than his Lordship's Approbation. By the Means of one of his Majesty's *Domesticks* I procured my Pamphlet a *private* Audience, by getting it laid upon his Table. Curiosity soon induced him to read it, and he return'd it to the Gentleman with this Character of it, *it is a very good Thing*. All his Enemies thought as well of it as his Majesty did, for I lost all my Interest in them, and very good Preferment from them, but had the Pleasure of receiving *publick Thanks* from a Writer of *Note* on the same Side.

I have met with many Disappointments, but the greatest is still behind. The late A. B. of *Canterbury*, for Humanity and good Breeding, hardly had his Equal. His Character as a *Gentleman* was so singularly eminent, that I never had Occasion to write to him, but I received an Answer under his own Hand, and always written with the utmost Kindness. In this respect he was superior to all the great Men I ever knew. The last Letter that he wrote to me, shewed the Weakness of his Nerves, but then it shewed the Greatness of his Respect for me, in writing to me with so much Difficulty. After That, he always answer'd me by Mr. *Herring*. By his *Grace's* Advice I publish'd my Book on *Prayer*, &c. and with his Consent *Inscribed* it to him. He would not suffer me to *dedicate* it to him,
but

but told me, *if I would inscribe it to him, it should be the same Thing to me, and he would thank me.* He was impatient for the Publication of the Book, and gave me five Guineas to hasten it. Some Time before, I had propos'd to throw myself upon the Mercy of the *Publick*, by the Advice of the Bishop of *Durham*, but his Grace's Answer was, *leave That to me.* When I publish'd the Book, not being well, I sent it to him, and followed it as soon as I was better. When I went, I found he had been reading it, and said, *I find you have gone to the Bottom of the Subject, but I did not doubt of its being well written,* or Words to that Effect, and gave me five Guineas only for the *Binding* of the Book, as he express'd himself; and from that Time to his Death, never trusted himself alone with me. I wrote a very moving Letter to him, which his Grace answered by Mr. *Herring* (a very worthy good natured Gentleman, to whose Humanity I am indebted) wherein he told me, that *he would have provided for me, if he could have done it, without doing Injustice to others.* Thus I have been taken under the voluntary Patronage of three of the greatest Men in the Kingdom, two of them *Primates of all England*, and have been a great Sufferer by every one of them; whilst I behav'd myself as well as ever I could, and have done as much Service as ever I could, to *Church and State*, to the *Bishops and Clergy*, for many Years under two *Diocesans*, without being able to get any Thing at all from them, besides the *Mortification* of seeing Persons prefer'd before me, that have never born the Burden and Heat of the Day; nay, perhaps, scarce sustain'd the milder Heat of their Morning Sun. Whether this be right, or not, the Bishop of *London*, has determined, for he made me very great Compliments upon my Book on *Patronage*, and the *Duty of Patrons*;
told

told me, that I had *spoke his very Sentiments*, and *that he had very freely given his Opinion to Bishop Gibson*.

The following *Petition* I deliver'd last Year to several of my best Friends among the *Bishops*.

To the Most Reverend the ARCHBISHOPS, and the Right Reverend the BISHOPS.

The Most HUMBLE PETITION of
William Webster, D. D.

SHEWETH,

THAT your Petitioner hath been upwards of forty-three Years in the Diocese of *London*, and taken a great deal of Pains to discharge all the *parochial* Duties of a Clergyman, and presumes that he has discharged them with great Credit to himself, and as much to the Satisfaction of his *Diocesan*:

That, notwithstanding the constant Burden of these *private* Duties, he has found Time to discharge the more difficult Duty of a *public Writer* for thirty five Years, in various Capacities, and, for above nine Years of that Time, has carried on a *weekly Paper*, call'd the *Miscellany*, in Defence of *Religion* and *Virtue*, the *Bishops* and *Clergy*, with so much *Success*, as to make himself Enemies of all sorts:

That, by being a Year and half out of all Business, and living solely upon *Credit*, together with divers unexpected and unavoidable *Losses*, *Disappointments*, and *Expences*, attending the Execution of his *public Schemes*, he was brought considerably into *Debt*:

That, above ten Years ago, from a great Desire

fire of doing Justice, he waited on the *late Bishop of London*, for Leave to go abroad till the Revenues of his Livings might clear off his Debts; his Income not being large enough for any Savings sufficient for that Purpose; but was answer'd, " that the Living of *Ware* was " a Cure of great Consequence, that he had " done a great deal of good there, and might " do a great deal more, and that therefore his " Lordship could not consent to his being absent " so long: "

That, having waited till he was out of all Hopes of getting any Addition to his Income, he was advis'd, and inclin'd (out of a strong Principle of Justice) to solicit a *charitable Collection*, which he began with so much Success that he would soon have made himself easy, as to his *Debts*, if it had not pleased God to visit him with a Fit of the *Palsy*, which left such an habitual Weakness upon his Limbs and Spirits, that he has not had Courage and Strength to execute such a tiresome and disagreeable Undertaking:

That, the *Bishops* being the *natural Patrons* of all *Clergymen*, who have suffer'd by their Endeavours to do service to *Religion*, especially by their *Writings*, and having received much *personal Respect* and *Kindness* from many of them, he is encouraged to apply to them for their *paternal Assistance*, in such Manner as shall seem meet to their Wisdom:

That, as he has shewn no little Zeal for the Credit and Interest of the *Clergy* in the Course of the *Miscellany*, and by writing in Defence of their *Maintenance* and *Tithe*, he apprehends it will be sufficient, if your Lordships will be

so good as to mention his Book upon *Prayer* and the *Sacrament*, to such of them as are in affluent Circumstances, and that they will be ready to take one of them, and pay a *small Compliment* to a Person, who has taken the most friendly Pains to serve the *whole Body* of the Clergy :

That, as your Petitioner has been a Sufferer in the Service of *Religion*, the *Nation*, and the *Government*, he cannot help thinking it hard, singularly hard, that *no one* Person either in the *Church*, or *State*, has undertaken to be his Advocate, since he is not able to be his own; while some *young Clergymen*, in and about *London*, without any publick Merit to recommend them, have found Friends to serve them, and to raise 4 or 500*l.* for the Payment of Debts, contracted sometimes not so honourably :

That, as to any *Addition* to his *Income*, your Petitioner does not ask for above 40 or 50*l.* a Year, to save him from great *Distress*, in case he should be render'd incapable of doing his Duty (as he has Reason to expect to be in a little Time, he being now very unfit for it) by sixty-eight Years of *Age*, and the *Infirmities* attending it.

That upon all these Accounts, if your Lordships will take his Case into your compassionate Consideration, you will do a most seasonable Act of Kindness, for which your Lordships most dutiful and respectful Petitioner will ever pray, &c.

I was in hopes that this *Petition* would have had some good Effect. Their Interest could have procured

cured me some Assistance besides their own *private Charity*, and my Case deserved it. I was farther induced to expect their *Recommendation* of my Book. The *Subject* was seasonable, and the Execution of my Design not unworthy of their Encouragement. I receiv'd the Thanks of the most *Learned*, and the most *Illiterate*. The *Subject* was old, but I am certain, there is an Improvement of it, both as to *Substance*, and *Method*. I cannot deny myself the Honour of publishing a short Letter of the justly celebrated Dr. *Young*, which I receiv'd from him soon after he had read my Book. I presume upon his Leave to publish it, because his Character will be of great Service to my Reputation, and no Discredit to his own.

DEAR SIR,

“ I Have read over your Discourses with Appetite, and I find in them much Piety, Perspicuity, Eloquence, and Usefulness. God grant them all the Success they deserve, you wish, and the World wants. Most assuredly, Devotion is the Balm of Life; and no Man can go unwounded to the Grave.”

I am,

Your's, affectionately,

E. YOUNG.

But with most People, *Religion* is dead, and nothing, but God, can bring it to Life again.

The *Petition* was drawn up in the Year 57; and soon after, my *Palsy* was succeeded by another Fit, though of a different Kind, which very much affected my *Strength*, and *Spirits*, and *Memory*.

I am now less able to solicit Assistance, and consequently, stand so much the more in need of it. Many Gentlemen, who are ready enough (and I thank them for it) to relieve me, *themselves*, plead, that they are the *worst Beggars* in the World; but I must observe, that where they have a *political Interest*, or, *Character*, to support, they make the *very best* and *most successful Beggars* in the World. Like the *Widow* in the Gospel, that tired the unjust Judge by her continual Application, they can prevail upon Persons to grant their Request, if it be but to get rid of them. But, to speak as a *Christian*, we are commanded to promote *Charity* with a becoming Zeal, *to go about doing good*, *to hunger and thirst after it*; to promote *Justice* and *Charity* in *others*, as well as to practise it *ourselves*.

I am now almost incapable of doing my Duty, and as incapable of being at the Expence of hiring *People* to assist me. My *Parishioners*, I thank them (some good People excepted) are more ready to *defraud* me of my Right, than to bestow *Favours* upon me: To make my Life as uneasy as possible, instead of rendering it as comfortable. I have cast *many Pearls before them*, and *they have turn'd again, and rent me*. A great Part of the Living depends upon *voluntary Contributions*, and for several Years, *Trade* and *Religion* have declined together. The People have less Money than ever they had, and they never had so little Inclination to part with it. Ever since I came
amongst

amongst them, I have done them all the good in my Power; and they have, many of them, return'd me all the *Evil* that ill Nature could invent. I will not say, as *St. Paul* said by *Alexander the Coppersmith*, the Lord reward them according to their Works; but I can truly say, as our blessed Master said of the Jews, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

But I correct myself. These profligate Villains did know what they were doing. They knew that they were contriving the Ruin of the *Innocent* and the *Deserving*; and such a Design could be form'd by no other Instigation than that of some *Infernal Spirits*.

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

This is their *Maxim*, and this should be their *Motto*.

Several Schemes were form'd against me while I was carrying on the *Miscellany*; particularly one, by an *Infidel Physician*. Immediately after I came to *Ware*, there was another villainous Report whisper'd about the Parish, by an *Infidel Lawyer*. By whom this last Plot was invented, I can't tell, at least I can't prove. But this I am sure of, without any Proof, they are neither *Christians*, nor *Gentlemen*. About seven Years ago died one Mr. *Thomas*, at *Tottenham*; as honest a Man as ever lived. I had known him a long Time. I esteem'd, and lov'd him. His Family were well respected and visited by all Persons of the first Fashion in the Place; which was not without *Quality*, *Members of Parliament*, and rich *Merchants*. As I had an Intimacy with them, I offer'd the *Widow* and her two *Daughters*, the Use of my House, and the Liberty of taking *Boarders*. How long this *Mischief* has been hatching I can't tell: But, since it broke out, I must take it to be of some standing.

But,

But, I have lately receiv'd some *anonymous* Letters, accusing me of a criminal Correspondence with one of the Daughters; and a Person of my *Age* and *Infirmities* was not very well qualified to keep any thing, but his own *Counsel*; which your *Keepers* could not conveniently do in a *Boarding-House*, without a vast deal of *cunning Contrivance*. The Letters I would *publish*, if they were not too full of *Bawdy* to be fit to be seen. My own Character is too *publick* not to be *known*, and too well *establish'd* to be call'd in question. The *Character*, and *Conduct* of the Ladies are as *unblemish'd*, wherever they have lived. Yet, the *Mother* has been represented as a *Bawd* to her own *Daughter*, and the *Sister* as a *Pimp*. The *Boarders* as *Spies* upon their *Conduct*, but consenting to the Scheme, and thereby making themselves *Parties* and *Accomplices*. This Story could not, and did not meet with Credit by any Persons of *Reputation*; but the *Place* is so *low*, and the People in *general* so *wicked*, that they are glad to *embrace* and *propagate* Scandal. The most *virtuous* Woman can't marry before she is *half gone with Child*, because it is too much the *Practice* of the *Town*. A hopeful People! The *Minister* has a fine Time of it! He may be more properly call'd a *Herdsmen*, than a *Shepherd*; and to be sent hither to feed *Swine*, rather than *Sheep*. The young Lady, though conscious of *Innocence*, could not help being greatly affected, and I could not be unconcerned, either for *her*, or *myself*. Her Perfections both of *Body* and *Mind* are such as would have recommended her to my *Choice*, had my *Circumstances* been suitable. Her *Temper* is inimitably sweet. Her Behaviour *affable*, *prudent*, and *inoffensive*, I
never

never knew a Person of more *common Sense*, and fitter to judge rightly of *Propriety* of Behaviour, and Things. Her *Belief* in a *Providence*, and her *Trust* in it, are great; tho' her Temptations to Fear, from the Weakness of her Constitution and Spirits, are strong. Her *Filial Piety* towards her Mother, her *natural Affection* towards her Sister, the *Tenderness* of her Nature towards Distresses of any Kind, are hardly to be parallel'd. Could I turn such a Person out of Doors, as these merciless *Villains*, in the Cruelty of their Disposition, were pleased to order me? She has done me *great Honour* in being my *Nurse*; her Prudence and good Nature may be the Means of prolonging a poor, short Life, and making a very uncomfortable one, at best, more tolerable.

F I N I S.

N.B. The Author may be heard of at Mr. *Johnson's*, Stationer, in *Paternoster-Row*; Deputy *Clark's*; and Mr. *Owen's*, at *Temple-Bar*.





